

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The allowable subject matter of claims 7, 14, 15 and 17 is noted and appreciated. Original claim 7 has been rewritten as (currently amended) independent claim 7 to include the limitations of claims 1, 6 and 7. Original claim 7 has also been rewritten as (new) independent claim 18 to include the limitations of claims 1, 2, 6 and 7. Claims 19-21 have been added consistent with claims 14, 15 and 17.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the method includes the steps comprising:

. . . completely removing said plastic layer (1) over the total circumference of the metal tube (2) at an area of connection (3), providing a conductive covering section (4) and at least covering the area of connection (3) on all sides of the area of connection (3) with said conductive covering section (4) and . . .

No such arrangement is shown in the prior art patent to Otto, No. 6,988,311. There no covering is removed, it is only cut into and displaced at the spaced locations (where the teeth 13 are located). The remainder of the tube coating at the area of connection is not removed. Moreoever, Otto does not show an area of connection that extends around the entire circumference of the tube. Only the teeth 13 contact the surface of the tube and thus electrical connection to the tube can only occur at three locations spaced around the tube.

Since the “area of connection” extends over the entire circumference of the tube, the conductive covering section, as claimed, must also extend over the entire circumference of the tube. Note in Fig. 3 of the Otto prior art the connection clip is discontinuous and does not extend completely around the entire circumference of the tube.

Claim 1 and its dependent claims clearly define patentable subject matter and should be found allowable.

New claim 22 is of a scope similar to original claim 6. It recites:

“removing at least a portion of said plastic layer of the metal tube at an area of connection.”

It also recites:

"providing a conductive covering section of conductive plastic material (4) which covers at least the area of connection (3) on all sides and pressing said conductive covering onto the area of connection of said metal tube (2) at least at its ends under radial pressure without any gaps."

Claim 23 recites the further limitation that the conductive covering section overlies the plastic layer adjacent both longitudinal ends of the area of connection.

Contrary to the examiner's position in the Advisory Action polypropylene is NOT conductive by nature. In fact it is known to possess high dielectric properties. Note that in Ikeda, electrically conductive copper wires 4 are employed.

The examiner's reference to Patent 4,026,648 is not understood. That patent confirms that plastic and rubber are NOT conductive by nature. (See Col. 8, lines 20-22).

Claims 22 and 23 should be found allowable. These distinctions also apply to claim 6 which depends from amended claims 1 and 2.

Applicants respectfully submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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